

PLATTE COUNTY RESOLUTION #2020-15

DECLARING A FIRE BAN IN PLATTE COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Platte County Fire Warden has recommended on this day a partial closure of all private lands within unincorporated areas of Platte County, Wyoming, to the use of open fires and incendiary devices, for an indefinite period; and

WHEREAS, significant portions of the county have had below average precipitation and strong winds resulting in early drying of fuels; and

WHEREAS, cheatgrass is fully mature in portions of the county which can greatly increase the rate of fire spread; and

WHEREAS, some critical federal and state resources typically available through mutual aid to Platte County fire departments for wildland fire suppression have been suspended or their timely availability significantly constrained by the Covid-19 epidemic; and

WHEREAS, the Wyoming State Forester has encouraged local departments to anticipate reduced state and federal support during planning for the 2020 wildland fire season; and

WHEREAS, the Platte County Fire Warden and county fire department chiefs believe the best means currently available to compensate for the loss of federal and state support for wildland fire suppression is to aggressively suppress all new fire starts so that fires are kept small, manageable and fully within the operational capabilities of local fire departments; and

WHEREAS, fire starts from natural causes are beyond anyone's control but the Board of County Commissioners of Platte County has the ability to reduce the number of man-caused fires; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Platte County agree that early preventive measures outlined in this resolution are essential for county fire departments to meet this year's wildland fire suppression challenges; and

WHEREAS, Wyoming Statutes §35-9-301, 35-9-302, and 35-9-303, give the Platte County Board of County Commissioners the authority, if certain conditions are met to "...close the area to any form of use by the public or may limit such use..", and

WHEREAS, it is uncertain how long the conditions may continue;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of County Commissioners of Platte County, Wyoming, that effective June 16, 2020 at 12:00 p.m., all privately-owned unincorporated areas within the boundaries of Platte County are subject to a partial closure and all outdoor fires and discharge of all fireworks are prohibited except as follows:

- (i) Frontier Astronautics LLC is excluded for the purpose of testing rocket engines, flight vehicles, and their associated hardware at their testing facility located at 609 Windmill Road. All fire suppression costs associated with this exemption will be paid by Frontier Astronautics
- (ii) Attended trash or refuse fires between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., inside containers provided with spark arresters or screens and located within an area cleared of all vegetation ten (10) feet in radius from the container, are permitted on private lands.
- (iii) Attended wood and propane campfires contained within a fire ring lined with rock or similar non-combustible material are permitted on private lands if fire suppression is immediately available, except on lands managed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission where all campfires are prohibited.
- (iv) Attended charcoal and propane fires within an enclosed grill are permitted on private lands, except on lands managed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission where additional restrictions may be imposed.

- (v) Use of acetylene cutting torches or electric arc welders in an area cleared of all vegetation within ten (10) feet in radius from any ignition source are permitted on private lands.
- (vi) Propane or open fire branding activities in an area cleared of all vegetation ten (10) feet in radius from any source of ignition are permitted on private lands.
- (vii) Fire departments are excluded from this resolution while conducting fire suppression activities or training.
- (viii) The lands under the Wyoming Military Department including Camp Guernsey are excluded for military related operations and/or training, including controlled burns, when approved by appropriate Wyoming National Guard Officials.
- (ix) The Town of Wheatland is excluded to burn their wood refuse pile.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the penalties, pursuant to W.S. §35-9-304, a \$100.00 fine, thirty (30) days in the Platte County Jail, or both, may be imposed for violation of the Resolution. The Platte County Fire Warden shall promptly notify the Board of Platte County Commissioners when the conditions are mitigated, and upon such notice the closing may be modified.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Platte County Commissioners requests the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission and the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources to adopt the measures outlined in this resolution to reduce the risk of wildland fires on lands they manage in the county. To further reduce the risk of man-made fire starts, the Board of Platte County Commissioners request that the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission and Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources prohibit the use of wood-burning campfires on lands they manage in the county for the period of this partial closure.

Notice of fire closure shall be transmitted to the Wyoming State Forester, 5500 Bishop Blvd, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002-0060.

Given our hand and seal this 16th day of June 2020.


BOARD OF PLATTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



 Sandy Kontour, Chairman




 Steve Shookley, Commissioner




 Ian Jolovich, Commissioner

PLATTE COUNTY FIRE WARDEN



 Aaron Clark, Fire Warden

ATTEST:



 Malcolm Ervin, County Clerk

